

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
2005**

**PURSUANT TO SECTION 321-27.5, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES  
REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT  
AN ANNUAL AUDIT OF THE SANITATION BRANCH**

**PREPARED BY:  
STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
DECEMBER 2004**

## **SANITATION BRANCH ACTIVITIES DURING FY 2004**

The Sanitation Branch is one of the core programs of public health that affects the broadest range of health-related activities. Its programs are established by statutes and administrative rules as statewide programs. This report provides a broad overview of the functional role and activities of the Sanitation Branch, as stated under Section 321-27.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, that, "The Department shall perform annual audits of the sanitation branch to be completed by November 30 of each year, and shall include an audit of:

- (1) Fees collected;
- (2) The number and results of sanitation inspections;
- (3) The number of training seminars held; and
- (4) The cost of training personnel in the sanitation branch.

The mission of the Sanitation Branch is to prevent the transmission of communicable disease and health-related injuries to the people and visitors of Hawaii by implementing programs for:

- (1) Food protection;
- (2) Assessing and assuring that hospitals and medical facilities meet sanitation requirements;
- (3) Inspection of tenement houses, lodging houses, boarding houses, and hotels;
- (4) Licensing of registered sanitarians, tattoo artists, and embalmers; and
- (5) Permitting of barber shops, beauty parlors, massage parlors, tattoo shops, mortuaries, public swimming pools, and public laundries.

The primary function of the Sanitation Branch is the food protection program which has evolved into a complex program focusing on public health practices through education, partnerships, prevention, assessment and compliance. Food is a significant element of Hawaii's multi-ethnic culture and is a principal attraction for visitors of Hawaii. The Sanitation Branch protects residents and visitors from exposure to food borne illnesses conducting inspections and assessments of food service establishments and ensuring that food is safe to eat.

In addition, the branch promotes means to assure food protection through education. The Food Safety Consultation and Education Program plays a vital role in preventing food borne illnesses by developing and implementing food safety surveillance and control plans, and conducting educational activities to assist the food service industry and food handlers.

The current practice of utilizing an educational approach to inform the public and motivate operators toward compliance with applicable standards and regulations has remained unchanged. In this regard, it is recognized that compliance with rules and regulations, not enforcement per se, is the primary objective of the Sanitation Branch. Wide dissemination of information concerning the technical and scientific basis for the program's regulatory requirements should contribute to a clearer understanding of the necessity for compliance. Education is always continuous, especially in areas where scientific findings occur. An informed public with a clear understanding of the public health rationale of program functions and corresponding regulatory requirements is a fundamental goal in assuring that potential environmental health problems are identified and resolved before actual illness, injury or fatality occurs.

Staff training also is a significant element for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness of staff in order to satisfy performance of program objectives. Mechanisms to provide on-going education continue to update and cross-train staff with the technological and organizational changes.

#### FEES COLLECTED

As authorized in Section 321-11.5, HRS, the Department can collect fees for permits, licenses, inspections, various certificates, variances and investigations and reviews. These fees are deposited into the Environmental Health Education Fund pursuant to Sections 321-27(a), which supports training of Environmental Health Services Division staff and food establishment personnel; as well as provides educational outreach to the general public regarding food safety. Revenues collected for fiscal year 2004 and deposited into the fund totaled \$625,742.99.

#### NUMBER AND RESULTS OF SANITATION INSPECTIONS

Inspections conducted during fiscal year 2004 totaled 9,406 with 12,866 violations reported.

#### NUMBER OF TRAINING SEMINARS HELD

For fiscal year 2004, the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program provided the following:

Number of Certification Workshops:	28
Student Attendance:	527
Food Safety Classes:	96
Student Attendance:	1,990

In addition to on-going workshops conducted by the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program, the following are highlights of personnel training for fiscal year 2004:

1. A Registered Sanitarian, whose responsibilities are key to regulating the milk industry in Hawaii, attended the Pacific & Southwest Regions Milk Seminar.
2. The program manager for the Sanitation branch attended the National Conference of Food Protection.
4. Registered Sanitarians in the Food Consultation and Education program participated in the National Environmental Health Association Annual Education Conference.
5. Sanitation staff also attended a division sponsored workshop in Emergency Response.

Cost for personnel training totaled approximately \$10,000.00, funded through the Environmental Health Education Fund.

In summary, food supply within the United States is among the safest in the world. However, despite continued progress in improving the overall quality and safety of foods produced in this country, food borne illnesses remains a serious public health problem. Continued vigilance in protecting the public from food borne illnesses is a vital function of the Sanitation Branch. Current resources are dedicated toward support of program activities, personnel enhancement opportunities and technology infrastructure advancements. Sustained vision for prudent utilization of current resources will continue to ensure protection of public health needs at a time when much of government service is restructuring and re-inventing itself from its former heavy enforcement orientation to partnership building, education and increased compliance.